

News from Ed Markey

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BUSH LAUNCHES 'STAY THE COURSE' PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN, PRESENTS NO NEW STRATEGY FOR IRAQ WAR

Washington, D.C. – Representative Edward J. Markey (D-MA), senior Democrat on the Homeland Security Committee made the following statement in response to President Bush's Annapolis speech on Iraq. Pressed by plummeting public opinion polls and rising concerns from Republicans and Democrats about the direction of the war, the Bush Administration released a declassified copy of the '[National Strategy for Victory in Iraq](#)' the document spelling out the governing principles of the war.

"George Bush has lost his way in Iraq and has failed to lay out any coherent strategy for exiting from Iraq.

"The original mission – to disarm Iraq of its Weapons of Mass Destruction – was accomplished before the war even began, but it began anyway. By March 2003, the UN inspectors had found no weapons. The UN inspectors said there were no nukes there, but Bush responded "I don't care." To justify the invasion, he gave the Generals a new mission – get rid of Saddam Hussein. They accomplished their mission when they captured Saddam. But now they have been given a new mission – to rebuild Iraq until it is "peaceful, united, stable and secure." That is a mission that could very well mean American soldiers will be based in Iraq permanently.

"Support for this war has steadily eroded because a limited focused mission has become an expansive mission without end. If we ever want the Iraqis to stand up, we are going to have to make clear that we intend to stand down. We will only find out whether "trained" Iraqis are truly able once we have plans to withdraw pursuant to a clear timetable.

"'Staying the course' is not a strategy for victory, it is a formula for keeping our troops bogged down in that country for many years. Today, instead of outlining what it will take to make progress in Iraq, the Administration released the '[National Strategy for Victory in Iraq](#)' the very play book of the same old 'stay the course' strategy that has led us to where we are today. Where has the Bush Administration's strategy of 'staying the course' taken us in Iraq? Two years after the war began, we have found none of the chemical or nuclear weapons that rushed our invasion. The Department of Defense now reports that the attacks on U.S. soldiers and civilians have increased in lethality and early reports of training the Iraqi army depict an Iraqi army overrun by factions that in some regions resemble religious militias. The President's 'stay the course' strategy by all measures is not working.

"This Administration owes Americans a picture of what the end game we are fighting for looks like. Bush's war is fought by Americans, it is carried on the shoulders of American soldiers and their families, and it is funded by the American people at a cost. President Bush cannot ask for the commitment of millions Americans for a plan without an end. The President owes the American people more than a checklist of what we have done and a rosy forecast of the future. He needs to tell us clearly how we will know that our commitment is finished and how we are going to get there from the daily chaos that our soldiers face."

More information on Representative Markey check out <http://www.house.gov/markey/>

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